



2016 Community Planning Program and Local Technical Assistance Program

Program Guide

The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), the oversight, funding and regional planning agency for the transit Service Boards (Chicago Transit Authority, Metra, and Pace) and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), the metropolitan planning organization for the seven counties of northeastern Illinois, announce the availability of funding and technical assistance for transportation and land use planning and implementation projects throughout the region. New this year, the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) Healthy HotSpot initiative is requesting applications to conduct local active transportation (pedestrian and bicycle) plans in suburban Cook County.

The RTA, CMAP, and CCDPH's Healthy HotSpot all have separate technical assistance programs, but applicants are now able to apply for all programs by using one application. Through this coordination, the agencies are able to offer planning and implementation assistance to an expanded base of eligible applicants, align all efforts with the GO TO 2040 comprehensive regional plan, and provide interagency expertise, technical assistance, and capacity.

Eligible Applicants

Municipalities, counties, townships, councils of government (COGs)/municipal associations, groups of two or more municipalities, and the RTA Service Boards (CTA, Metra, Pace) located within CMAP's seven-county region are eligible to apply for assistance. The CMAP region encompasses Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties. Nongovernmental organizations in the region are eligible to apply for CMAP assistance but are required to have support from the local government in which their project will take place. For RTA assistance with transit-related projects, nongovernmental organizations must partner with a governmental organization to submit the application (please see the FAQs for more details). CCDPH's Healthy HotSpot will exclusively be supporting local active transportation (pedestrian and bicycle) plans that are sponsored by municipalities within suburban Cook County. Healthy HotSpot is an initiative led by the Cook County Department of Public Health, aiming to make suburban cook county healthier one spot at a time through partnerships for healthy living. For more information, visit www.healthyhotspot.org.

Eligible Projects

The funding programs encourage applicants to undertake a balanced, coordinated, and integrated approach to land use and transportation planning that benefits local communities while maximizing the use of the RTA transit system and advancing the implementation of GO TO 2040. Eligible projects are generally one of the following types:

Implementation

- Zoning code updates (municipal-wide or TOD area)
- TOD developer discussion panels
- Plans to improve pedestrian access to transit
- Training for elected or appointed officials
- Innovative implementation projects

Planning

- Transit-oriented development (TOD) plans
- Corridor, subregional, or local access improvement plans
- Comprehensive plans
- Downtown, neighborhood, or subarea plans
- Multimodal transportation plans or bicycle and pedestrian plans
- Sustainability plans
- Water resource management plans
- Housing plans, including *Homes for a Changing Region* plans
- Capital improvement plans
- Planning prioritization reports
- Planning studies on special topics, such as economic development, natural resources, or other issues covered in GO TO 2040*

Please see the project category descriptions at the end of this guide for more details. Funds available through these programs are for planning purposes only. Capital, engineering, operating, staffing, land acquisition, or equipment costs are not eligible. Acceptance of projects is dependent on funding availability.

**Projects that do not have direct transportation or land use components are eligible, but CMAP's ability to pursue these projects depends on its success in securing outside funding.*

Local Match

Local match depends on which program and/or project you are submitting. Match requirements are described by program below.

- **CMAP.** This year CMAP will be requiring a local match for many Local Technical Assistance (LTA) projects. Larger projects such as comprehensive plans and corridor plans will require a match, while some smaller project types will not. Match requirements will be based on the economic and demographic characteristics of the area served, with lower match rates for smaller communities and those with lower tax bases or median incomes. Match rates will range from 5 to 20 percent. CMAP is happy to provide match rate information to communities upon request. Further information on match requirements is described at the end of the FAQ section.
- **RTA.** A local match is not required for small-scale Community Planning (RTA assistance) projects, such as implementation projects. Larger Community Planning (RTA assistance) projects, such as TOD plans or corridor studies, will require a 20 percent local match. The RTA will notify applicants if a local match will be needed prior to project approval.
- **CCDPH.** Local match is not required for CCDPH's Healthy HotSpot active transportation plans; however, please note that these grants are only available to communities in suburban Cook County.

Regardless of whether a match is required, significant local commitment of time and effort is needed to make a project a success, and applicants should be prepared to answer questions from the funding agencies about their overall level of commitment.

Project Evaluation and Selection Process

These programs are competitive, and it is expected that more project applications will be received than can be accommodated. Each application will be initially screened for program eligibility based on the following:

- Project located in the seven-county CMAP region
- Eligible applicant
- Eligible project type
- Duplication of previous project (i.e. projects that duplicate other recent efforts will not be selected)

Eligible projects will then be evaluated based on the following criteria that are shared by all of the funders:

- Alignment of the project with the recommendations of GO TO 2040 and the Regional Transit Strategic Plan
- Feasibility and ability to implement
- For implementation projects, the project must implement a recommendation from an adopted plan (TOD plan, comprehensive plan, etc.). Priority for implementation assistance will be given to previous RTA and CMAP grantees, but others are also eligible to apply.
- County, COG, and transit Service Board feedback

CMAP, RTA, and CCDPH also have some criteria that are unique to their programs:

- **RTA.** All transit-related planning and implementation projects will be evaluated and, if selected, conducted through the RTA's Community Planning program. Transit/TOD projects must be located on the existing transit system. Applicants are encouraged to obtain a letter of support from the impacted Service Board (Metra, Pace, CTA). Applicants are encouraged to email a brief description of their project to the appropriate service boards. Requests for letters of support must be made by **June 11, 2015**. Please email your request to:
 - CTA – Gerald Nichols, gnichols@transitchicago.com
 - Metra – David Kralik, dkralik@metrarr.com
 - Pace – Lorraine Snorden, Lorraine.Snorden@pacebus.com
- **CMAP.** Projects without an explicit transit focus will be evaluated and, if selected, conducted through CMAP's LTA program. Projects undertaken by CMAP will also be prioritized in part based on community need, with communities that have lower incomes, smaller tax bases, or smaller sizes receiving priority. CMAP also prioritizes multijurisdictional applications and seeks to maintain a geographic balance in its LTA projects.
- **CCDPH's Healthy HotSpot.** All active transportation plans supported through the Healthy HotSpot initiative must be located within suburban Cook County and be sponsored by a local municipality. Priority will be given to communities that have lower incomes, experience high levels of obesity among residents, and experience health disparities.

Once all applications are received, RTA, CMAP, and Healthy HotSpot staff and representatives will determine which agency each of the applications should go to and will notify applicants. Each application will be reviewed by staff as well as other agencies, including Counties, COGs, and transit agencies, as appropriate. During the review process, RTA, CMAP, and CCDPH Healthy HotSpot staff or representatives will contact each applicant to ask questions regarding the details of the proposed project. Project acceptance is dependent on funding availability. Most accepted projects are expected to commence within six months of acceptance notification.

Program Timeline

All Projects	
Date	Action
May 1	Call for projects released
May 19	Information session Tuesday, May 19, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at CMAP RSVP to Erin Aleman (ealeman@cmmap.illinois.gov or 312-386-8816)
June 11	If transit-related project, contact made to transit agency for letter of support
June 25	Applications due before noon
July	RTA / CMAP / CCDPH staff and representatives notify applicants which agency will evaluate their application
July-August	RTA / CMAP / CCDPH staff and representatives review applications and contact applicants with additional questions on their application
September	Preliminary project selection recommendations released; all applicants notified RTA conducts a public comment period on the recommended projects
October	CMAP Board approves recommended LTA projects; successful applicants notified RTA Board is notified of recommended Community Planning projects Healthy HotSpot representatives and CCDPH select projects and selected applicants notified
December	RTA Board approves projects and funding for recommended projects; successful applicants notified

How to Apply

Applicants should complete the one-page application form available at www.rtachicago.com/applications.

Additional Information

For questions regarding the Community Planning, Local Technical Assistance, or Healthy HotSpot programs or your application, please contact:

Community Planning program:

Heather Tabbert, AICP
Regional Transportation Authority
Manager, Local Planning and Programs
tabberth@rtachicago.org
312-913-3244

Local Technical Assistance program:

Erin Aleman
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Principal Planner
eameman@cmap.illinois.gov
312-386-8816

CCDPH Healthy HotSpot program:

Kasey Holloway
Project Manager, Healthy HotSpots
kasey@activetrans.org
312-216-0485

Detailed information on the Community Planning and Local Technical Assistance programs can be found on the RTA website at www.rtachicago.com/applications.

Project Category Descriptions

IMPLEMENTATION

Zoning Code Updates

Clearly-defined land control regulations minimize uncertainty for developers. They can also minimize opportunities for variances and special uses while maintaining the community's design, form, and character goals for their community. Additionally, transit-supportive ordinance updates may minimize administrative confusion by outlining all standards, requirements, and guidelines in a manner that can be globally understood. The RTA and/ or CMAP will work with local government staff to streamline the process (including the approval process) to make investing in the community more attractive to potential developers and other investors by creating clearly defined land control regulations. The project team will assess the current regulations in each chosen community and deliver a revised zoning ordinance or other appropriate land control document, overlay map, or text amendment. Zoning updates can be done for an entire community or specifically a TOD area. More information on approaches to revising zoning for a TOD area can be found in the RTA's [TOD and Zoning Report](#).

TOD Developer Discussion Panels

Developers bring a realistic outlook to the future of the real estate market. Facilitating discussions early in the redevelopment of a parcel will allow the community and potential developers to outline needs, goals and incentives while working together to utilize land to its highest and best use. For municipalities that have adopted TOD plans, but have had difficulty soliciting guidance and advice from development experts, assistance will be provided to identify and solicit developer guidance through a half-day discussion panel. This panel will discuss the development climate and potential strategies to prepare for and attract development in the municipality's TOD area. Additionally, if a community owns and controls a development-ready parcel of property in the TOD area, RTA staff can assist with the preparation of an RFP. Take a look at the summaries from TOD developer panels held in [Franklin Park](#), [Bensenville](#), and [Mokena](#).

Pedestrian Access Improvement Plans

Pedestrian Access Improvement Plans identify ways to improve access to existing transit routes and facilities for existing residents and commuters. For these plans, RTA staff will work with the local applicant and other agencies to examine existing pedestrian access to the transit station and develop recommendations for improvement. Possible improvements include amenities such as sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian signal heads, bus shelters, bus pads, and station amenities such as benches,

wayfinding signage, etc. The plan will include an implementation plan that prioritizes and suggests phasing for the recommendations. These plans can be used as a basis for grant applications to pay for recommended improvements. Further information on pedestrian access improvement plans can be found in the [Making Way Access to Transit Guide](#). Sample completed plans can be found in [LaGrange](#) and [Robbins](#).

Training for Elected or Appointed Officials

GO TO 2040 notes that the building blocks of local planning for livable communities are high-quality plans, ordinances and other regulations that are consistent with adopted plans, and trained and educated decision-makers. Plan commissioners, zoning board members, and elected officials regularly make decisions that determine the built environment of their communities, and it is important for them to understand their legal responsibilities related to planning as well as their role in shaping the overall region's future. CMAP currently offers trainings to plan commissions after the completion of LTA projects, but will also accept applications for stand-alone trainings of decision-makers on planning issues.

Innovative Implementation Projects

Implementation projects are the main focus of the Community Planning program and an increasing emphasis of the LTA program. While the primary types of implementation projects are outlined in this section, the RTA and CMAP recognize that applicants may have different implementation needs that will help move an adopted plan forward. The RTA and CMAP are open to taking on new, innovative implementation projects through this program that can improve transit access and increase ridership of existing commuters, reverse commuters, older adults, and occasional riders. If you have an idea for an implementation project that is not listed here, please contact the RTA or CMAP to discuss before submitting an application.

PLANNING

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plans

TOD plans are based on the basic tenets of transit-oriented development; mixed land uses, higher residential densities, and pedestrian-friendly environments. These plans produce recommendations for an appropriate mix of land uses and transportation improvements within a quarter- to half-mile radius of a rail or major bus station or along a major bus corridor that supports increased transit ridership. They also address urban design elements, including streetscape improvements, and recommend multi-modal mobility improvements to and within the station area.

TOD plans are used to guide and manage development and redevelopment within the station area or transit corridor while integrating the transit facilities and mobility improvements into municipal or county land use plans. These plans are realistic, based on current and future market conditions, community preferences, and feedback from the development sector. If your community has an existing TOD plan, but it is more than ten years old and out of touch with current market realities, the RTA will work with you to update the plan, focusing on updating the market assessment, development program and implementation strategies. More information on TOD can be found on the [RTA's Transit-Oriented Development Page](#). Examples include completed TOD plans for [Geneva](#) and [Lombard](#).

Corridor, Subregional, or Local Access Improvement Plans

These plans create recommendations for improved transit opportunities by identifying options to enhance local mobility or improved access within a specific study area. Access improvement plans identify ways to improve multi-modal access to existing or planned transit routes and facilities and identify opportunities to enhance transit-related infrastructure. Possible improvements investigated include amenities such as sidewalks, bus shelters, bus pads, and multimodal transit centers, as well as

roadway improvements to reduce traffic congestion. Multimodal access and circulation, and/or way-finding and signage, may be addressed. These plans also typically include land use, zoning, and development components to spur economic development within the study area. These plans can also identify options to solve the "last-mile problem" for reverse commuters by recommending improved connections among the transit services used by reverse commuters, such as Pace Vanpools or community transit services, and identifying increased roles that employers can take to improve transit opportunities within the study area. These plans provide benefits to local communities as well as the RTA transit system, such as: barrier-free access and circulation patterns; increased multi-modal transit and pedestrian activity; and vibrant street life anchored by the activity/transit facilities within the communities. More information on these types of plans can be found on the [RTA's Community Planning website](#). The [Harlem Avenue Corridor Study](#) and [95th Street Corridor Study](#) are good examples of completed projects.

Comprehensive Plans

Comprehensive plans establish a long-term vision for a community and provide a policy framework intended to help the community achieve that vision and community goals. Typically a year-long process, comprehensive planning involves the public and community stakeholders (business owners, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, staff, etc.) in conversations about challenges, opportunities, priorities, and aspirations for the future of the community. Early stages of the planning process involve an inventory and assessment of the community existing conditions including population, housing, economic development, transportation, land use, and natural resources, and may include other topics relevant to individual communities such as stormwater management, health, historic preservation, food and farming, or community character. Subsequent stages involve developing and discussing planning scenarios, preparing future land use plans and maps, and establishing effective policies and implementation strategies for moving forward. Communities with specific stormwater management challenges and an interest in integrating green infrastructure and land use based solutions within the comprehensive plan are also encouraged to apply. Sample projects include comprehensive plans for [Blue Island](#), [Lakemoor](#), and [Norridge](#).

Downtown, Neighborhood, or Subarea Plans

These plans typically address specific area or topical needs or challenges rather than the comprehensive approach used for comprehensive plans. They may be focused on economic development and revitalization, housing, retail, industry or a combination of these topics for a discreet area of a community. While the planning process for these smaller-scale plans is similar to that for comprehensive plans, they result in more specific recommendations for the particular topics and areas of interest. Plans that will result in projects that are consistent with the LEED-ND rating system are encouraged. Sample projects include the [Riverside Central Business District Plan](#) and the [Fairmont Neighborhood Plan](#).

Multimodal / Active Transportation Plans or Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans

These plans address non-motorized and transit-based transportation needs, often with the goal of improving and increasing access and use of alternatives to automobiles. Beginning with an inventory of existing resources and conditions, the planning process engages users and the public in conversations that lead to the identification of problem or conflict locations, the development of feasible solutions, and a plan for implementing the identified solutions. Topics can include route planning and infrastructure, intersections, stations and transfer points, signage and signalization, streetscapes and furnishings, and access to people with disabilities. Examples of this type of projects include the [Wheeling Active Transportation Plan](#) and the [South Elgin Bicycle and Transportation Plan](#).

Sustainability Plans

Sustainability plans serve to identify and forward the environmental goals of a community. Such plans can address a wide range of potential topics depending on a community's specific interests and issues, including land use and development, transportation, energy, water resources, waste management, greenhouse gas emissions, education, and many others. The planning process is similar to that of a comprehensive plan, with a detailed existing conditions analysis and thorough public participation process, followed by the development of recommendations. Implementation of a sustainability plan is of particular importance, since making progress in reversing current environmental trends is essential to long-term sustainability. One unique element typically included in a sustainability plan to help spur implementation is the development of "baseline" and "target" indicators. Baseline indicators, which are developed as part of the existing conditions analysis, serve to evaluate current conditions related to a topic (for example, a community's current waste diversion rate or amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced). Target indicators are essentially quantifiable goals for the future (such as a percent increase in waste diversion or reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by a target year). Setting quantitative targets is a way to ensure that implementation strategies are effective and that the community is held accountable for making progress toward its sustainability goals. Resiliency plans, which would also fit within this category, are focused on preparing a community for potential challenges due to changes in the frequency and intensity of climatic events. Many such plans in the region are likely to address stormwater management and flooding challenges. Sample projects include sustainability plans in [Park Forest](#) and [Niles](#).

Water Resource Management Plans

Communities seeking to improve water resource management that will result in improved water quality, such as through improved stormwater management, green stormwater infrastructure, local plan and policy updates, and other planning related activities, will be eligible for CMAP's LTA assistance. Projects within watersheds that have Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved watershed-based plans are preferred; however, assistance shall not be restricted to these communities. Watershed-focused organizations may apply with demonstrated support from the community or communities where the project will occur. Proposals for watershed plans will be reviewed jointly by Illinois EPA and CMAP staff. Examples of this type of project include [Evanston's Water Conservation and Efficiency Plan](#), ordinance work on the [Ferson-Otter Creek](#) in Elgin, and the [Northwest Water Planning Alliance's Drought Preparedness and Response Plan](#).

Housing Plans, including *Homes for a Changing Region* Plans

Homes for a Changing Region (Homes) projects develop long-term housing policy plans for one or more municipalities. These plans aim to create a balanced mix of housing types, serve the needs of current and future residents and workers, and enhance the livability of participating communities. Plans recommend policies that address current and avoid future gaps between demand and supply of housing available to all income, tenure and age groups. Since housing markets do not conform to municipal boundaries, applications involving groups (4-5) of collaborating municipalities will receive priority. In these cases, CMAP will create plans for each municipality individually and for interjurisdictional collaboration. CMAP will partner with the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) and Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) whenever possible to provide *Homes* technical assistance. Applications that request training for a County, COG, or nongovernmental organization to perform technical tasks associated with the *Homes* process after the initial project is complete will also receive priority. For more information about *Homes*, please visit www.cmap.illinois.gov/homes.

Planning Prioritization Reports

Communities with limited planning experience, few professional planning staff, or several competing priorities may not be certain what type of project they should pursue. In this case, CMAP recommends

starting with a planning prioritization report to help identify the community's needs and priorities. Planning prioritization reports involve interviews with local stakeholders, review of past planning work, and analysis of local data. Communities that know they have planning needs but are not certain exactly how to solve them are good candidates for planning prioritization reports.

Planning Studies on Special Topics, such as Economic Development, Natural Resources, or Other Issues Covered in GO TO 2040

Other types of projects are also eligible for LTA assistance. These specialized projects may focus on economic or workforce development (such as the [Morton Grove industrial areas plan](#)), parking (such as the [Hinsdale parking management plan](#)), integrated health, land use, and transportation plans, and many others. Links to more projects of various types are available on the [LTA home page](#) on CMAP's website. Potential sponsors of projects of these types are encouraged to contact CMAP to discuss their project idea before submitting an application to determine eligibility.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Who is funding this program?

Funding for this program comes from a combination of federal, state, and local funds from the RTA, CMAP, and the CCDPH Healthy HotSpot initiative.

2. Is a funding match required?

It depends on the type and size of the project being proposed. Please see page 2 of this program guide and contact RTA, CMAP, or CCDPH with any questions. Applicants will be notified if a local match will be needed prior to project approval.

3. What types of projects have the RTA, CMAP, and CCDPH worked on in the past?

The RTA has completed TOD Plans, transit improvement plans, corridor studies, TOD zoning code updates, developer discussion panels, and transit access improvement studies. A full list of previously funded RTA planning projects may be found at <http://www.rtams.org/rtams/planningProgram.jsp?id=1>.

CMAP has worked on comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, housing policy studies, corridor plans, neighborhood/subarea plans, sustainability plans, water conservation studies, and many others, and a list is available at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/lta/>.

CCDPH has supported the creation of active transportation plans and Complete Streets design and implementation guidance, bringing the disciplines of public health and urban planning together to combat chronic disease and physical inactivity. Previously funded plans may be downloaded at <http://atpolicy.org/library>.

4. Can I submit more than one idea?

You may submit more than one project proposal. If you choose to submit more than one proposal, please do so by completing a separate application form for each project idea you are proposing.

5. What projects are NOT eligible?

Project phases such as land acquisition, engineering, or capital investment are not intended to be pursued through this program. This program focuses on planning and small-scale implementation activities.

6. Can I request money to cover staff time at my organization?

This program does not offer funds for staff time. Any financial commitment from CMAP or the RTA is dedicated to hiring external contractors/consultants or providing RTA or CMAP staff assistance.

7. If I applied to either the RTA or CMAP in past years and was not selected, can I apply this year?

Yes, you are able to apply again. Please note that this year (like previous years) will be quite competitive, so an application that was not selected in a previous year is not guaranteed to be selected this year. Feel free to reach out to RTA or CMAP to discuss how you could improve your application this year.

8. If I have received assistance in past years, can I apply again?

Yes. CMAP and RTA encourage applicants to submit applications that seek to implement existing plans, particularly if CMAP or RTA assisted with preparing those plans in the first place. You may also submit applications for completely separate projects as well. However, please make sure that your application doesn't duplicate work done in the recent past – it won't be selected if this is the case.

9. How competitive will the application process be?

Competitive. For example, last year, only 25 percent of applications to CMAP were successful.

10. How will projects be evaluated?

Projects will be evaluated based on criteria derived by RTA, CMAP, and CCDPH. The RTA will evaluate and select transit-related projects for the Community Planning program, while CMAP will evaluate and select projects for the LTA program that are not explicitly transit-focused. CCDPH will select a limited number of active transportation plans in suburban Cook County. Criteria are described in the main text of this document.

11. How do CTA, Metra and Pace get involved in transit-related projects?

Each transit agency that can potentially be impacted by the study is invited to participate. Additionally, it may be appropriate to involve CMAP in an RTA-led project and vice versa.

12. Do other external groups get involved in these projects?

Yes, other government or nongovernmental groups are often involved in projects, either serving on steering committees or reviewing materials. Both RTA and CMAP also contract with outside groups for assistance on some projects. It will strengthen your application to identify any partnerships that you already have with external groups.

13. Who is responsible for managing the project?

A CMAP, RTA, or CCDPH staff member or representative will be assigned to each project to assist with project development and management, though the local grantee will be responsible for overall project management. Administrative and invoicing responsibilities will vary depending on the assigned funding agency (CMAP, RTA, or CCDPH) and procurement method selected.

14. How is it determined which agency manages which projects?

Once the applications are received, the agencies will discuss the alignment of the applications with each agency's interest. Projects with a direct transit focus are more likely to be managed by the RTA; those without transit components will go to CMAP; and active transportation plans

in suburban Cook County will also be considered by CCDPH. You do not need to specify at the time of submitting the application whether you think your project is a better fit for RTA, CMAP, or CCDPH's Healthy HotSpot – this will be worked out during the application review.

15. How do CMAP, RTA, and CCDPH decide whether to provide selected communities with staff assistance, consultant assistance or other types of assistance?

During the project review and evaluation process, staff will contact each applicant to gain a better understanding of their project and determine what type of assistance is most appropriate. After selection, the agencies confirm with project sponsors whether the project will be accomplished through assigning staff time, providing a grant, conducting a consultant selection process led by CMAP or RTA, or other options. The final decision on type of assistance is made jointly by the funding agency (CMAP, RTA, or CCDPH) and the project sponsor.

16. I submitted an application by the June 25 due date. What are the next steps and how are projects selected?

Immediately following the receipt of all submittals, staff will begin a review of the applications. While staff make the final project selections, staff considers feedback from all three Service Boards (CTA, Pace and Metra) and other agencies as appropriate. During this time staff will also contact all applicants to ask questions as necessary. The applications are qualitatively reviewed by the set of criteria listed in the application. You will be notified by staff from the appropriate agency regarding selection outcomes. Subsequent steps for projects admitted into the program will depend on which agency funds the project. A detailed timeline is included in the program guide.

17. What is the anticipated timeframe for projects to begin?

Once a project is selected into the program, project development begins. Our goal is to initiate most of the projects within six months and complete each project within eighteen months of project initiation.

18. Who can I contact if I still have questions?

Please contact Heather Tabbert (tabberth@rtachicago.com), Erin Aleman (ealeman@cmmap.illinois.gov), or Kasey Holloway (kasey@activetrans.org).

19. What if I am not sure what type of project my community needs? We know we need planning assistance, but am not sure whether it is a comprehensive plan, corridor study, etc.

Please describe the problem that you are trying to solve to the best of your ability. We will work with you to determine what planning product best meets your community's needs. Please see the description for the Planning Prioritization Reports, which may be a good product for your community to do first.

20. My project does not relate directly to transportation, and I saw the note that projects of this type are contingent on CMAP receiving additional funding. What's the likelihood of this happening? Is it worth my time to submit an application for these types of projects?

CMAP continually applies to non-transportation funding sources to supplement our transportation sources. CMAP does encourage applicants to put in requests for projects related to housing, economic and community development, natural resources, and similar topics, for three reasons:

- a. The application form is simple, and it will not take you much time to do.
- b. CMAP does think there is a good chance it will get some additional funding.

- c. Having some firm examples of good non-transportation projects that have been submitted to us may even increase our chances of receiving funding, by demonstrating that there is a demand for this kind of planning assistance.

21. I am a nongovernmental organization and would like to submit an application. You require support from the relevant local government – can you explain what that means?

First, please note that nongovernmental applicants will only be considered for inclusion in CMAP's program. The RTA does not provide funding to nongovernmental groups – so if you are specifically interested in RTA funding, please work with a relevant local government to have them submit an application on your behalf.

CMAP does work with nongovernmental applicants, but only with the explicit support of any local government affected by the project. If you are a nongovernmental group proposing a project in a suburban municipality, you will need to provide a letter of support for your project from the municipality. If your project affects more than one municipality, please provide letters from each of them.

If your project is in the City of Chicago, we require a letter of support from any Alderman whose ward is affected by the project. We also require that you contact the City of Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) or the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT) to inform them of your application and to discuss how your proposal would interact with other ongoing planning initiatives in the City. You do not need to procure a letter of support from DPD or CDOT, but they will assist CMAP in selecting projects in the City of Chicago. The contact people are Bob McKenna, Assistant Commissioner of DPD, Robert.McKenna@cityofchicago.org and Susan Mea, Assistant Director of Transportation Planning at CDOT, Susan.Mea@cityofchicago.org.

22. How will CMAP calculate local match?

CMAP is beginning to require a local match in 2015. This will be assessed on a sliding scale: many communities will have a required match of 20 percent, but communities that are smaller or have lower tax bases or incomes will have a lower match requirement. Approximately half of the region's communities will have a reduced match requirement, which will vary from 5 to 15 percent based on the community's circumstances.

For large municipalities and Counties, projects that affect only one part of the jurisdiction will calculate their match rates based on the demographic and economic conditions of the affected area. In general, match rates will be calculated based on the best available data for the area affected by the project. This is CMAP's first year requiring a local match, and we expect that there will be questions. Please contact Erin Aleman at CMAP for more information about your community's match rate.

23. Will applicants need to have the local match in hand at the time of the application?

No – CMAP and RTA expect applicants to have the local match available at the time that the project starts, but they are not required to have it immediately available when the application is submitted. The funding agencies are flexible with project start dates, and can work around local budget cycles.